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LETTER

TO A

Young Gentleman

AT THE

TEMPLE.

Lex inventum ac munus Dei est. Pandect. Tit. 3.



LONDON;

Printed in the YEAR 1726.

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Darrington, April 1726.

T O

Esq; at the Temple.

DEAR Sir,

THIS long Letter out of the Way of *News* or *Business*, but *not* out of the Way that you and I sometimes converse together in, I am making ready to be forwarded and deliver'd to you by the first Opportunity of any of my Acquaintance taking a *London Journey*.



YOU know already, both by what I have wrote and talk'd with you, my Judgment and Thoughts in general about the *ORIGIN OF MORAL VIRTUE*, and that I think it a Matter of *great Importance*, whether we *consider*, or choose rather to *abstract and set aside the Consideration of the WILL OF GOD* in this Enquiry.

If it be the Duty of *all Christians* to *set GOD always before them*, and to *do all Things to his Glory*, if the Practice of *any Duty whatever*, and of *all Duties incumbent on us*, is properly doing the *Will of*

GOD, and generally call'd so in the Oracles which contain the *best and perfectest Rule of Action*, then I think there is good Reason we should be *jealous and fearful* of admitting any Notions and Schemes that stand in need of, *imply*, or suggest an ABSTRACTION OF THE WILL OF GOD.

AND even as to NATURAL RELIGION, it will exclude by the *Terms* all such Abstractions. The Word RELIGION, like most or all other Words, has been us'd at Times in Senses somewhat different, but never otherwise, I think, than as *relative to the Deity*.

MORALITY and *natural Religion* have been commonly us'd as *synonymous and equivalent* Expressions. It has been the common Sentiment therefore of Mankind, that a REGARD TO THE SUPREME BEING is *ever connected with the PRACTICE OF MORALITY*; and then it should be as certain, because it is a plain and natural Consequence from thence, *that it ought not to be disjoin'd from or abstracted and omitted in the THEORY of it*.

If any * *Sect* of Men are to be excepted, as by *profess'd Principle*, taking away all such *Reference of Justice*, and of all *moral Virtue*, and denying, that Men *conform'd themselves to the WILL and to the NATURE of the DEITY therein*, I suppose it must be the *Epicureans*; and some such Representations of them we find in antient as well as modern Authors. But then

* *When Tully in his third Book de N. D. puts the following Words into Cotta's Mouth—Nam justitia quæ suum cuiq; tribuit quid pertinet*

then it must be remember'd, that they who charge them (be the Charge true or false) with *these Principles*, do also represent them as abandon'd to all Vice, and scandalously *immoral also in their Practice*.

YOU and I are both perswaded, that the RELIGION OF NATURE is delineated *admirably well* by Mr. WOOLASTON. Only I think indeed he *narrows his Bottom* more than is convenient, and that He is too solicitous to make those Foundations appear weak, which have been *laid by others*, as well as to engross the Credit and Glory of that which He has laid to *himself*.

FOR He remarks of *Moralists in general*, not excepting the better Sort and Families of them, but including *Christians* as well as *Pagans*, " That tho' they
" pretend to have found that Rule by which Acti-
" ons may be discriminated, or that ultimate End

tinet ad Deos? Hominum Societas & Communitas, ut vos dicitis, iustitiam procreavit—It may seem as if one if not both Sides of the Disputants held, That Justice had no manner of Reference to GOD either by way of Resemblance or of Derivation. But when we consider that it is the Sect of the Stoics Cotta here disputes withal, who were very far from entertaining such Notions as these, we must either say that the Words before cited (which are a Representation not of Tully's real Sentiments or of Cotta's, but of the luxuriant and vain Arguments of Carneades or Aristotle, or most probably of both of them) do carry in them an unfair sort of an Insinuation in regard to Balbus and his Sect; or else that they import only this, viz. that Society, as the Stoics will readily allow, supplies the Opportunity, the Field, and the Occasions for *practising Justice betwixt Man and Man*.

“ to which they ought all to be refer’d, yet what
 “ they have advanc’d is either *false*, or not *suffici-*
 “ *ently guarded*, or not *comprehensive enough*, or not
 “ *clear and firm*, or, so far as it is just, *reducible to*
 “ *his Rule*.” And again, after he has labour’d to
 shew the Weakness of several of these, he says, *pag.*
 25. “ Whether any of those *other Foundations* upon
 “ which Morality has been built, will hold better
 “ than these mention’d, I much question.”

For my Part I have the Pleasure to think, that
 there are a great many Books and Accounts of these
 Things, and a great many written by our own Coun-
 try-men, of which it may as well be said, that *they*
comprehend and take in Mr. Woolaston’s Rule, as
 that *they are reducible to his Rule so far as they are*
just. For,

IT is the LAW OF OUR NATURE, the WILL OF
 ITS GREAT AUTHOR, who is no other than the
 GOD OF TRUTH, that we should regard Truth
 most religiously both in our *Words* and *Actions*. The
 GOD OF TRUTH, the AUTHOR OF OUR NA-
 TURE, the GREAT LAW-GIVER is ONE AND THE
 SAME. What *Need* is there to confine ourselves to
 one of these single Views, if it be really possible so
 to single and separate them? What *Prudence* can
 there be in obstructing *any of the Avenues*, or *ab-*
stracting any of the Considerations by which Light
 and the most useful Knowledge may come to us?
 Why should we not gladly embrace and make use
 of *every Mean and Opportunity, every Way* which
 lies

lies open to us of discovering *Truths* and the *Will of GOD* relating to us.

I do not mean by this to represent Mr. Woolaston as one that was for *abstracting the Will of GOD* in laying the Foundations of and establishing *Morality*. I only think, as I said before, that he has *narrow'd his Foundation too much*, and that one might be led sometimes to think, that He was going to build his whole *Fabrick* upon a Proposition *more single* perhaps than what he really has done, unless the *Unity and Singleness* of it may be made out by its *Reduction to the Will and Law of the great Author of Nature*. For *abstract the Will of the Supreme Being*, suppose the contrary to what Mr. Woolaston says, pag. 14, 52, 73, &c. of the *Constitution of Nature* BEING GOD'S CONSTITUTION, and that rational Beings are to take it AS SUCH, and OBEY THE LAW which the Author of *their Being* has given them. Suppose the contrary to all this, and all the *fine Things* he says of *Truth* and *Morality*, would have neither *Strength* nor *Sense* in them.

WHATEVER this Gentleman might think of the *Newness* of his main Principle, which in one Part of it He has certainly pursu'd *farther*, and represented *more copiously* than ever any had done before Him, I can assure you, my old Friend THOMAS AQUINAS has been *before-hand* with him in it for *one*, and has express'd it, tho' in short, with all the *Accuracy* as to the *Sentiment* that is possible. I mean not to commend him for *Elegance of Style*, which is a Thing of much *lower Consideration*, and what no one will look for

for either in *Aquinas* or in any of his *Cotemporaries*. For thus we have the true and compleat Notion tho' but in *Epitome*. 22dæ q. 109. *Veritas vitæ dicitur quâ quis rectè vivit — quâ homo exteriora sua, vel verba vel facta, vel signa debito ordine disponit. — Vita est vera, sicut & quælibet alia res, ex hoc quod attingit suam regulam & mensuram, scilicet divinam legem, per cujus conformitatem rectitudinem habet. — And so in another Place, — Veritas vitæ dicitur secundum quod homo in vitâ suâ implet illud ad quod ordinatur per intellectum divinum. Imæ qu. 16. d. 4. in fine.*

A MAN may talk of *Truth of Life*, of *Morality* and *Goodness* to very little Purpose, and be really saying *nothing*, if he denies or knows nothing, or will have *nothing consider'd* of the *DIVINE WILL AND LAW*, the Conformity to which is that which makes the Life and Actions of Men *true and good*, and the Want of it just the contrary.

ARISTOTLE wrote whole Books of *Morality*, and he has a Chapter *περὶ ἀληθείας*, which is apply'd to *Life*, as well as to *Truth of Words*, and *Actions* are formally produc'd as direct and proper Instances of *Lying*, or *Falseness*. Yet I do not say that *He* has also been before Mr. *Woolaston* in his grand Principle, since as to the referring *Truth*, *Justice* and *Goodness* to *GOD*, and measuring them by his *Law*, at least the doing it in an *intelligible, clear, and uniform* manner, You know I have given him up. I did it *honestly*, and I believe *safely enough* too from any reasonable Zeal or Attacks of *Peripateticians*, since I am behind

behind the *Entrenchments* of so many *Passages*, some already produc'd, and some that I could further add (but that it would look too much like a *supererogating Pedantry* to do it) as would sufficiently shew them, if this Philosopher has *any where* express'd himself *rightly and accurately* in the matter *he must have talk'd both well and ill of the same thing*. I perceive too, that several of the Ancients, if we may depend upon the Authority of a Learned Person, who has not thought fit to cite or name any of them, have complain'd long since of the *Looseness* of Aristotle, *de laxitate Aristotelis*, in this very Point. I wish he had thought or spoke *better*, and that I had met with such things in him, as that I might have got a little *forwarder in my Argument* by speaking of him, than the shewing *by his Defect*, that the Systems of Morality, labor'd by the *acuteſt Wits*, who shall *decline or omit to speak of a Divine Law* and Men's primary Obligations thence arising, may be blown away with a Breath for want of a Foundation to fasten them on.

HERE is, I mean in *all Systems of Ethics upon this Plan*, an imperfect Aim at and Appearance of a *charming Picture*, which may take the negligent Eye at a sudden Glance, or at a Distance; but the Beauty vanishes upon near Advance, and is a *confus'd and glaring nothing* upon discovering the Want of the *principal and essential Strokes* for constituting the intended lovely Form.

HERE is a *Stream*, without the *real help* of which 'tis allow'd Mankind would be extremely wretched, — The *Waters of moral Life*, — a delightful Stream watering all the habitable World — but in *Imagination* only.

only. Alas, it is only an umbratic and a visionary Stream, for its plain there can be no *real* one, or Waters deriv'd where there is not a Fountain to supply them.

I CAN give you yet another *Simile*, and not unapt to the Occasion, but as I have near exhausted my own Stock of Wit in that way, we will go to an * *Antient Writer* for it, or at least for the main Draught and Thought of it, as thus. *Take in the Divinity* into your System of Morality, and, if it be regular also in all other Respects, it is like a compleat human Body beautifully form'd, and aptly dispos'd for exerting all the Offices and Acts that a *living* Body is capable of. *Abstract the Divinity* from your Schemes, suppose they have no Concern at all with nor Reference to GOD and *his Will*, and your Morality will be like a *Body without the HEAD*, from whence the *Spirits* are deriv'd, the *Principle* of Motion and Action to all the other Members, *otherwise useless and inanimate*.

YET I mean not to say, but that we may make very good Use of such Books as are so defective even in the main Principles, after that we our selves have for our own parts *supply'd those Defects* by Thoughts that should arise readily, and be always uppermost in a *Christians Heart*. Neither do I believe, but that there are Persons, who by a *different Apprehension* of things, *another Track of Thought*, and a *great Zeal in opposing the contrary Extreme*, are too much inclin'd towards this *abstracting Notion*, or at least make use of very unguarded and improper Expressions in the matter, who yet are very Pious and Excellent, as well as very Learned Men.

* Lactant. Lib. 6. Sect. 8,

I AM persuaded, that it will be very difficult, or rather impossible, to disprove the following Assertion, which I lately met with in a little Treatise call'd a *Rational Catechism*, and printed at *Amsterdam* 1712. It is thus, pag. 33.

“ IF GOD be the Author of all Things, then
 “ whatsoever we find our selves oblig'd unto by the
 “ Nature of Things (I mean either of GOD, of our
 “ selves, or of others) we are oblig'd unto it by
 “ GOD himself, who framed and disposed Things in
 “ that manner”.

WE are not to take our Notions in such Matters upon *Trust*, and from the Authority of one or other; yet it is some Satisfaction to understand by Reading and by Conversation, that an Opinion which one has embrac'd (and not without Examination of it) is both approv'd and contended for by many learned and good Men. And if I find, as I think I may do in this very Case, not only *some* or *many* of our *modern Divines*, and of the *most eminent Lawyers* (for they too have treated this Question) but the *whole Stream* of antient Doctors, of *Fathers*, and of *Schoolmen* with me, I conceive it full as necessary, and surely it will or ought to be full as pleasant at the least, to join with the *οἱ πολλοί* where they *adhere to Truth*, as it is to think and go with the *wiser Few in Opposition to the Herd*, when there is a Conviction that it goes astray. I will own too, that I am *confirm'd* rather than *shaken* in the same Opinion, when I observe Persons that generally reason well and strongly. Persons that are capable of defending whatever has a Foundation of Truth, arguing with a *Want of Life and Force unusual* for these

Positions, altogether indeed indefensible, viz. *That the Grounds of all moral Obligations do not depend upon any Law; but that the eternal necessary Differences of Things lay an Obligation on Men to do what is right and fit even separate from the consideration of those Rules being the Will or Command of GOD, and that this eternal Reason of Things is the original Obligation of all—That the moral Fitness of Things was antecedent to and independent of any Divine Determination concerning them; and that the doing what is right and fit in the Nature of Things becomes a Rule and Law to us, not as we are reasonable Creatures, but as we are intelligent Beings.*

THE Skill and Abilities of Dr. Clarke cannot uphold a disjointed Fabric necessarily ruinous in it self. And the Author of the previous Question and Supplement, if there had been any thing solid that could have been alledg'd, in support of what he had incautiously and needlessly advanc'd to the above-mention'd Effect, would never have argu'd, I think, after the following manner.

“ Though GOD is the Author of our Nature, and
 “ of those Relations we stand in to him, and to each
 “ other, yet when a Creature is thus constituted and
 “ thus related, the Duty which he is in Reason oblig'd to, will necessarily and unavoidably arise from
 “ his Composition and his Relations as aforesaid.”

Surely the taking our Medium, and a Medium from which our Conclusion is plainly and rightly infer'd, and the disguising it a little with a *tho'* and a *yet*, whatever it may do towards perplexing the Cause and casting a Mist, can never be thought to infer, or to be indeed compatible with his *opposite* Conclusion. He goes on—“ And this will always be the Case, *i. e.* it will
 “ be

“ be eternally fit in the Nature of the Thing for a
 “ Creature, constituted and related as Man is, to act a
 “ part suitable to and becoming human Nature. I
 “ say this will always be his Duty, whether GOD
 “ interposes by a Revelation, and gives any Com-
 “ mandment concerning it, or not”. There is not a
 Word here in support of the Propositions above-men-
 tion’d, unless it be in that *Hint*, as if we might sup-
 pose, that in some Cases GOD may never have com-
 manded, or made it appear to his Creatures to be his
 Will, that they should do what they perceive is fit
 and right for them to do. Which thing ought *by no*
means to be suppos’d, because GOD has given all Men
Knowledge of Good and Evil, and at once and by the
 same Gift, the *Knowledge of his Will*, that they should
choose the Good, and avoid the Evil. For the rest, the
 Things I have cited, though offer’d in Proof of the
 Fitness and Unfitness of Things and of an Obligation
 upon Men to do or not to do them *antecedent* to and
independent on the *Will of GOD*, are consistent with,
 and not only so but are Arguments for *our* contrary O-
 pinion. For what is there that follows more naturally
 and obviously from this *acknowledg’d* Relation betwixt
 a Creature and its Creator, than an Obligation to be
 subject and obedient to the Creator? What can more,
 or more evidently, become a *Creature constituted and re-*
lated as Man is, than religiously to observe the Will
 and Commands of him that made him?

“ THE Duty, it is said, which a Man is in Rea-
 “ son oblig’d to will necessarily and unavoidably arise
 “ from his Composition and his Relations as afore-
 “ said”. Very true this. But I think we have a
 better

better Interest and Right in this Truth, if I may so express my self. I mean, it is much more congruous to our Opinion, who do not make nor admit of the *Abstractions* so often spoken of; it is more proper and consistent in our Mouths by far than it is in the Lips or Writings of the Abstracters, and Asserters of an *antecedent Fitness* in Things and *Independency thereof on the Will of GOD*. A Man's Reason, as a learned Foreigner * Mr. Barbeyrac, has well observ'd, if you consider it out of all Reference to and Dependance on the Creator, is nothing but himself; and therefore those who are upon the *independent Bottom* will be still to seek for an *Obligation*. For how common soever it may be in vulgar Discourse, and in a looser Sense to say, that a Man puts an Obligation upon himself, Men of Learning know that to assert this, and in the strictest Sense of it, would be a *Solecism in the Schools*. If he could properly impose an Obligation, he would have just as good a Right and as much Authority to *absolve* and *quit himself* of it at his Pleasure.

BUT let us not be misunderstood when we say that the true and proper Foundation, upon which our Obligations to the Pursuit and Practice of Virtue and Goodness are built, is the WILL OF GOD. We are as far as any can be from conceiving *That* to be *ambulatory* and *capricious* like the Will of Men. To sup-

* Professor of Civil Law sometime since, and it may be still, in the University of Groninghen, who has wrote, I think, very judiciously, and avoided (as I hope I have done) both the Extremes in the present Question. See his Reflections upon Mr. Leibnitz's Letter and Judgment concerning the Treatises of B. Puffendorf.

pose the WILL OF GOD *arbitrary, unjust, unholy,* is a Conception *full of Impiety,* and that *gives us Horror.* We know (though we purposely and carefully abstain from Terms that are really indecent, and that are liable to be look'd upon as very highly irreverent, we know) and consider it is a WILL EVER IN AGREEMENT WITH ALL THE INFINITE PERFECTIONS OF THE DIVINE NATURE, so that no Rules can ever oblige Men but what are agreeable to *their Nature,* and fall in with the natural Fitness of Things in *all Respects.* And in this View it may rightly and truly be said, that we are *oblig'd* to regard the natural Fitness, the Reason and Truth of Things, and that by acting contrary thereto we should be not only foolish and imprudent as departing from our Interest, but we should be justly obnoxious to GOD's Anger and Punishments *as having violated his Law.* The Law of GOD is unquestionably a *Paternal Law,* which *kindly obliges* us in general to pursue Happiness, and directs us also in the particular Pursuit of it. For otherwise there would be a perpetual Frustration of our natural and most strongly implanted Hope and Expectations, of which we can no more divest our selves than we can quit our selves of our Being. Our *Interest* will ever be *connected* and be *one with our Duty,* for GOD is certainly a *Rewarder of them that seek Him.* Yet I do not ultimately, or at all in Propriety, found the Obligations I am under to do the Things that are right and good (and that will, I know, promote my true Happiness) in the *Fitness* and *Tendency* of such Things to promote either *my single Happiness,* or a much more *general and extensive Good,* as I perceive

ceive some do, I refer them *ultimately and* * *constantly to the WILL OF GOD*, and not sometimes to the *Will of GOD*, and at other times to *any Fitness of Things whatever* suppos'd to be *antecedent* to and independent on that Will. GOD being essentially Good and Just (to whose Goodness and Justice nothing can be *antecedent*, any more than any Thing, or Relation of Things, can be *prior to his Existence*) I find my self mov'd more strongly and powerfully to satisfy the Obligations the Author of my Being has laid me under, and that my Duty is thus practicable, and less difficult, to me by the *Expectation and Assurance of a Reward*. It is proper and necessary, I think, to the accurate treating of this Point, that we should not *confound* any *Motive or Excitement*, how great soever it may be, with the *proper Obligation*, though the *latter*, as we might collect in some Measure from the plainest natural Notions of GOD, and may be assur'd of from Revelation, is never without the *former* in the Case that we are considering. It is by the *Expectation of a Reward*, that we are excited and encourag'd to do cheerfully that which is *incumbent* on us, that which

* It cannot, I think, be reasonably objected against me, that I go wide of, or beyond the fixed Mete and Mark, by arguing from the Goodness or the Justice of GOD; because with me, and with all Men who have not defac'd some of the most natural Apprehensions of the Deity, these are imply'd and included necessarily in the Idea of GOD. To say such Obligations result from the Will of GOD who is Just and Good, is not really saying any more than that they result from the Will of GOD. The Ideas are the very same, without any the least Alteration, or additional one convey'd thereby to any but a Manichean, and I have sufficiently made it appear that I am none of that Sect.

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the *Author of our Being* has oblig'd us unto in his most equitable, unchangeable, and paternal Law.

THUS I neither derogate from *God's Authority* by abstracting the consideration of his *Will* in seeking for the *Foundation and Fountain of our Obligations* to the Practice of *Virtue*, or by supposing any *Thing antecedent* to it ; nor do I plead for or suppose an *Authority* that is not *certainly and indissolubly connected with the most perfect Goodness*. PATERNAL AUTHORITY gives us Ideas as agreeable and lovely as the Image of DESPOTIC TYRANNOUS POWER is disagreeable and horrid. How absolutely incompatible then must the *One* be to the DEITY ! How lovely the *Other* when all possible, i. e. DIVINE PERFECTION is added to it ! Thus, I think, I neither forget the *Frame or Make of Man*, eagerly desirous of his own Happiness, nor that he was thus constituted by GOD, and by Him commanded to pursue Happiness, to which he has so natural and strong a Bent. I refuse not the Name of *Virtue* to Actions that proceed from a mix'd Principle, wherein *Self-Love* and *Interest* bear a Part ; at the same time I look upon it to be an Error on the worse Hand, tho' it is so plausible an Opinion, that even serious and thinking Men, without any Byass towards *Epicurism* (as commonly understood at least) I know, may go into and contend for it, viz. That *Self-Love* or a regard to private Interest, present or future, is the sole Principle of human Conduct, the precise and only Foundation of Mens Obligations to the Practice of *Morality*.

THUS I have spun out these general Thoughts to a much greater Length than I at first design'd. For my first Intention in this Letter was to keep far out
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of a *Common-Place*, by selecting such things as were peculiarly suited to the way of Life which You are in. I will now consider my self as Writing to the *TEMPLE*, and so wave every Argument but what is proper to your Profession, or at least so much pertaining to it, that I have been led into the Thoughts, or had Occasion to make the Remarks from Books, that may come under the general Denomination of *Law-Books*, tho' they meddle not with either the *Common* or the *Statute Law*, which You are oblig'd to be most particularly vers'd in. And if I shall take a few things from any of the *Philosophers*, they will have Relation to *Laws*, are such in kind, if not perhaps the very same, as are often *referr'd to by Lawyers*, since some of them are cited by your *Ulpian*, your *Gaius*, or your *Marcian*—and from them taken into the *Body of the Civil Law*.

It is very natural and proper for a *Student in the Laws* to make Enquiry into the ORIGINAL OF LAWS; and so we see that one of the first Titles in the *Pandects* is *de Origine Juris*. Antient Customs, the several Privileges and Powers of the *Senate*, the *People*, *Kings*, *Consuls*, *Decemviri*, *Tribunes*, *Prators*, and all who had any thing to do with *Legislation*, are Examind: *Roman Laws* are trac'd into *Greece*, from whence they were some of them fetch'd, and they were brought into *Greece*, it may be, from *Egypt*, or other distant Countries. This is without doubt a very proper and useful Enquiry for Men of the Law in several Countries to make concerning the several Laws in use amongst them. But they will by no means have made the full and sufficient Enquiry in-

to the *Origin of Laws*, till they also studiously C O M M E N T O N T H E E T E R N A L L A W, to use the Words of *Tully* (apply'd by him in general to Men of all Professions, and advis'd as the best Preparative for Death) whose own Sense of *this Eternal Law* will be produc'd in its proper Place.

B Y how much the more this Eternal and Immutable Law is kept *out of View* and unconsider'd, so much the more any Man will fall from the Dignity of his Profession *as a Lawyer*, be so much less useful, and have the less true Title to be respected on the score of it, or of any thing else. But it is something *sacred* as it were, and that commands our Respect and Reverence, *without a Coif*, to be the Assertors and Interpreters of Laws that *are deriv'd from Heaven*, and that *derive* Peace and Happiness to the World.

D O N'T be afraid of my going to the Borders even of Enthusiasm to set off the Dignity of the *long Robe*, or of That which is the *Subject* of your Studies. I shall explain my self so as to be sufficiently clear, I think, of that Suspicion or Objection in any Part of it ; and if You should hereby or otherways be thus perswaded, I shall have no Concern that such a Persuasion will have any other than a *good Effect upon You*, although I know that *high and grand Notions* of the Dignity of a Man's *Profession* (or of his *Nature* either) may be carry'd too far, and then *must* have ill Effects, or *may*, even when they are within Bounds, and capable of being supported, sometimes and accidentally prove mischievous in their Influence upon *vain and weak Minds*.

I AM sensible that the magnificent Expression I have here us'd of *asserting and interpreting Laws that are deriv'd from Heaven, and that derive Peace and Happiness to the World*, may seem descriptive of, and is more eminently applicable to another Order of Men, viz. to the *Christian Ministry*, to Men whose Office has unquestionably much more of *Sacredness and Dignity* in it, as their Studies are engag'd in Laws that are both *immediately Divine*, and that *directly* aim not only at the Temporal, but at the *Eternal Happiness* of Mankind; whereas those their most important Interests can be consulted by Professors and Practisers of the Law as such *only indirectly*, whilst their private Advice, their public Behaviour and Pleadings in Court, or their didactic Writings tend to improve Men's Minds, to establish them in right and good Notions in a very *important part of Morality*, and therefore in *conterminous common Points and Places* where the two Professions may be said as it were to *meet*, and each of them claims to have some Cognizance and Concern.

WHEN I think or speak therefore of a *right and worthy Lawyer*, I have the Idea not only of a Man that is vers'd in little *Forms* and forensic Terms or Methods, or that can tell the *Rise* of such a *Custom*, the *Occasion* and the *Date* of any Law; but of one that is also the Defender of Justice and Equity from Principles of Reason, which the Laws he cites were founded on,—which would have had their Weight and Force *before the Conqueror or Ina*,—would have been the same, whether any of the *Normans*, the *Saxons*, or the *Romans* had asserted and enforc'd it by their Sanctions or not. I have the Idea of one who

is occupy'd about things without which the Peace and Order of the World could not subsist, nor could Societies and public Bodies of Men have any good Settlement or long Continuance, if at all a Being.

I CAN hardly persuade my self that fix'd Constitutions and Laws of Society were so late introduc'd into the World as *Josephus*, zealous to shew the singular Felicity of his own Nation, and to magnify their Polity (as he had without dispute very sufficient grounds to do from other Topics) above all other Nations of the World, does represent them to have been. And it is a shrewd Observation he makes in his Argument to shew the very late Introduction of Laws amongst the *Grecians*, that at the Time of the Siege of *Troy*, or it may be later, at the Time when *Homer* himself liv'd, the *Grecians* had no Laws, as may be presum'd from there being no mention of Laws to be found in all his large and celebrated Poem. I don't think it worth my while to examine and see if I could spy out any thing like νόμος in the *Iliad*, as upon another Occasion I met with something, and without searching for it, very like a * Word that was said by learned and curious Men not to be met with at all in our Author, and that with its Tribe of very different, and often very empty or most confus'd Ideas, could have been much better spar'd and banish'd out of the World than this we are speaking of. I will not be so solicitous, I say, as to examine our old Poet for this, tho' if I could find out Laws there, I should certainly expect to see them coming down from Heaven too

the Poet, where the Law is and is not in

in some way or other ; and if it prov'd but to be a grave and decent Representation, it would, you know be something pertinent to my purpose. But whether *Josephus's* Observation be exact or not, supposing it to be good and true in point of Criticism, there seems to me to be *too much Stress* laid upon it, and that he somewhat stretches the Argument about the *late Knowledge and Use of Laws* amongst all other Nations but that of the *Jews*.

BE it as it will, unhappy surely were the Times when *Laws* were *rare* and *more imperfect*, the Times when *Arbitrary Rule* strong, but full of Mischiefs in its Infant State, partly depopulated the rude World before they had made any proper *Checks* or *Barriers*, and partly join'd Men together in a kind of *barbarous Society* with an *Iron Yoke*—not a *Golden*, but an *Iron Age* ! When the *Will* perhaps of some mighty *Tyrant Hunter* was the sole Law to the trembling *Herd of Slaves*, and the capricious Humour of some proud aspiring Creature was *instead of Reason*—in the Place of his *Holy and unchanging Will* to which the *most perfect Rectitude is essential*, from whom *Reason* it self, and all Laws *reasonable, salutary, and beneficial* to Mankind are *deriv'd*.

MEN therefore who are *honestly* employ'd about *these Laws*, have certainly a Claim of Right to a good deal of our Regard and Esteem. It is enough to prove I am not singular in this Notion, to shew that *Ulpian* looks upon his Brotherhood, and that the *Emperor Justinian* looks upon them too in much the same View, as appears both from the first Title in the *Pandects*, where the *Lawyers Care and Employment*

ment is asserted to be a * *true Philosophy*, with a Hint of its being much preferable to some Speculations that had *obtain'd the Name of Philosophy*.

It is to be fear'd indeed, that there have been, and may still be, Men of such *avaritious Souls*, of such *venal Consciences*, and *Talents*, that they would not scruple to make Use of them, of the *Law*, and of every thing that's Sacred to the *perverting* of Justice and Judgment, to the *Interversion* of private Rights and Properties, and the Diminution of the public Tranquility, the Peace and Order of the Community, so they might but obtain their private Interests and gratify their Avarice.

GAIUS calls it coming to the Profession *with unwashen Hands*, when Men come to it *without having search'd into the Origin of the Law*—*Multum inconveniens erit, omissis initiis, atque Origine non repetitâ, atque illotis ut ita dixerim manibus, protinus materiam Interpretationis tractare.* He means I doubt by the *Original of the Law* here chiefly, if not solely, the ancient critical History of the Laws, the knowing when and upon what Occasions they were made. But if my Representation of the *Origin and ultimate Reference of Law* has carry'd the Sacredness of it somewhat higher, or at least has made it plainer, then I have still a bet-

* Jus est ars boni & æqui, cujus meritò quis nos Sacerdotes appellet. Justitiam namq; colimus, & boni & æqui notitiam profiteamur, æquum ab iniquo separantes, licitum ab illicito discernentes, bonos non solum metu pœnarum, verùm etiam præmiorum quoque exhortatione efficere cupientes; veram, ni fallor, Philosophiam non simulatam affectantes. *Lib. 1. ff. tit. 1.*

ter

ter right to use the Phrase of *unwash'd and unholy Hands*, when I speak of those who dishonour themselves and cast a Reproach upon their Profession by being guilty of *mean and foul Practices* in it. And tho' it would be no particular Help or Guard to Mens *Honesty* to know the *History of Laws* many Ages backward, yet certainly it will be a Restraint from the Practices here spoken of, and from making the Law serve for an Instrument of Oppression and all manner of Injuries, if Men will seriously consider its *highest and ultimate*, i. e. *Heavenly and Divine Original*.

I CONFESS it is but too visible, that ill Custom, and Time, with the Help of such ill Men, or in some Cases of an *insipid, formal, trifling* sort of Men, has introduc'd into the Practice of *our Law*, in *some* of its Parts and Branches, such mean and such pernicious Things as will require the Zeal and vigorous Efforts of the *Great Men of the Profession*, and it may be the Assistance of the *Legislature* too to correct them.

BUT taking it in general, with the fair Prospect of ill Men and ill Practices in any Branch being more and more discourag'd and reform'd, or taking it, as it is here my Design to do, in the *best Point of Light* (for Things may be view'd in different Lights, and every Thing said the antient Sage has *two Handles*) taking it with a View to the *best Men* and to the *noblest and purest Parts and Practice* of it, surely it should be hop'd, and even without so many of these Salvo's, that THE PROFESSION OF THE LAW WILL NOT HAVE LESS OF TRUE AND VALUABLE PHILOSOPHY IN IT, NOR BE MORE UNHOLY NOW THAN

THAN IT WAS IN THE DAYS OF ULPIAN OR
GAIUS, AND IN THE HANDS OF HEATHENS.

I GRANT that Laws are by a common Distinction divided into *Divine* and *Human* Laws. But how are we to understand this Distinction? Is it meant that *Human* Laws which are good and equitable have *no higher* a Source and Reference than what is Human? Or that the Laws of Men have an *original independent Force of their own*? No certainly. But *Divine Law*, when us'd in this Manner and Distinction, signifies *that which has GOD IMMEDIATELY for its Author*; for as for the rest, the Force of Human Laws, though not indeed from GOD *so immediately*, yet comes (as the best Lawyers allow and teach) from the *Law of Nature*, which is undoubtedly the *Law of GOD*.

MEN of Learning, Thought, and good Judgment will never assert the contrary to this great Truth, but they may not always express themselves with equal Clearness and Accuracy. An Author of very good and deserved Credit has express'd himself unhappily for one Instance, and I will venture to say unagreeably to his own general Notions, when he says, " That
" Mens Obligations and the Rules about their Conduct as to Good and Evil are manifestly *deriv'd*
" *from Three great Sources*, viz. from the Light of
" Reason alone, from Civil Laws, and from Revelation."
What all upon a Par? All originally and equally Sources? *Puffendorf* I am sure was a wiser Man than to think it, and I can produce some very good Reasons for my saying so. If this were the Case, then Human Laws might have an obligatory Force, which it is the greatest Absurdity imaginable

to say they would, whether they *were conformable* to the Dictates of Reason and Divine Injunctions, or *not*. It is true that Men must have a regard, in forming their Conduct, not only to the general *Dictates of Reason*, and all the *Precepts of Revelation*, but also to *Human Laws*, and take them in as part of their Rule in *Subordination*, and *so far as they are conformable to GOD's Law*, which must be all that our Author meant, who knew that Human Laws *not deduc'd* from the Divine Law are *no true Rule of Action* to Men, nor can *induce any Obligation*, who never look'd upon Civil Laws as having an *Original Force*, an *independent Channel*, and a *proper Source of their own*.

I AM far enough from believing that *Solon*, *Lycurgus* or *Numa* took their Laws from immediate Converse with the *Divinity*, or so much as a *Demon* or *good Spirit*, extraordinarily commission'd and appearing to them. And if they endeavor'd any of them to have it believ'd they did, I shall be as free as any one can be to own, that they greatly *impos'd upon the Peoples Credulity*. Indeed *several* of their Laws, good as they were in the main, were in *no Sense* of a *Heavenly Original* and Extract. And again I don't imagine that even the wisest and best Laws which are made in *Christian Countries*, that all or any of *our Acts of Parliament*, after all the public Prayers of the Nation to Heaven to Bless and Prosper the Consultations, are IMMEDIATELY *the Laws of God*. But, I say, that when Laws are made by any Community one or other, agreeably to Reason, Justice and Truth, agreeably to the general immutable Law of Him who is the Author of our Nature, the Author and Giver of every

every good Gift, the obligatory Strength and Force of these Laws is *from the Divine Law from which they are deduced*, and such Laws I think are most reasonably to be expected, where the *whole Body* of a People are assisting, to derive a Blessing thus from Heaven by their *pious and united Prayers*; where the *Legislative Power* is in the Hands of *Men*, who may contemplate and behold the *DIVINE LAW* in the *best Light* it is given to *Men* to see it in, and who profess the greatest regard to it. And there is but one thing more that can be wish'd for, and *That* the *Supposition of Charity* commonly will add, *viz.* that they be *Christians* not only by *Profession* and *Name*, but in * *real Life and Truth*.

IN one place of the *Digests* a Saying of *Demosthenes* is quoted, wherein he calls Law † *The Invention and the Gift of GOD*. In the same place *Chrysippus* also is quoted for saying, † *That the Law had an uncontrolled Sway*

* Thus it was lately and very wisely said upon a solemn Occasion before *One of the Houses of Parliament*, and it must include and have Reference to their *Legislative Capacity*, or the Share that Estate has in *making, altering, or amending* Laws, though it is not to be restrain'd to that alone, *viz.* "That a vicious private Life is the very worst Preparative for a public Station, and he that acts wickedly as a Man has lost the best Security he can give to any Community that he will act honestly as a Patriot".

† Πᾶς ἐστὶ νόμος ἐννεμα μὲν καὶ δῶρον Θεῷ. Omnis lex inventum ac munus Dei est. *The Universality of the Proposition makes no Difficulty. All Law is every good and binding Law; and thus Tully disallows, that any Sanctions and Constitutions whatever are entitled to the Name of Laws if they be bad ones.* De Leg. lib. 2. c. 11.

‡ Ὁ νόμος πάντων ἐστὶ βασιλεὺς θεῶν τε καὶ ἀνθρωπίνων πραγμάτων. Lex est omnium divinarum & humanarum rerum Regina.

in the Direction of all Things Divine as well as Human, a thing which scarcely any Man, whatever Sect he was of, would have affirm'd, much less a *Chief* of the *Stoics*, without understanding the Law he gave so great an Extent and Force to, to have *had its Origin from above the World*, and the Will of any of its Inhabitants.

As for the *Stoics*, there was no Topic amongst them commoner than this, that Men should with Submission and Pleasure accept all Things as being what they are by *the Appointment and Will of Heaven*. And it appears from what *Tully* says in the Person of *Velleius* the *Epicurean*, that *Zeno*, the Father of the *Stoic* Family, referr'd Mens Obligations to be just and good to *the Divine Law*, but how he came to *animate* it *Velleius* wonder'd; and well any Man might if he took it literally—*Zeno autem naturalem Legem divinam esse censet, eamque vim obtinere recta imperantem, prohibentemque contraria, quam legem quomodo efficiat animantem intelligere non possumus, Lib. 1. de N. D.* The Figure of *animating* and *personalizing* Ideas, Attributes, Properties, &c. has many a time been us'd full as harshly as it is in this Case by *Zeno*; Or rather I may say that there is no great Boldness of Figure in it. Laws that are abrogated, that have grown into Disuse, and have lost their Force, are commonly call'd by the Name of *dead Laws*. Why then may not *Life* be apply'd and very emphatically to the *Law that never can be abrogated*, nor lose any of its Force, the *Eternal Law of the living GOD*, the Law of Him who gives all Creatures Life, in *whom we live and move and have our Being*.

How would it have adorn'd and compleated any of these Titles which I have nam'd, had there been
added

added also that glorious Passage cited by *Lactantius* from *Tully* in his third Book *de Repub.* where he calls Men to a *sursum corda*, to look up to Heaven for the universal unchanging Eternal Law, comprehending and binding equally all Nations, and all Ages of the World, because they are all under the common Obedience of GOD the Supreme and Universal Governor, who is the Author and Giver of this Law—A Law, which every Man who shall refuse to comply with it, will degrade Himself from the Dignity and the Nature of a rational Creature, and consequently would exceedingly punish himself, though no positive Pain or Punishments *which some think of* in a future State should be inflicted on him. *Lactantius* gives the due Praises to this * remarkable Passage; but I imagine he did not observe the *Hint in the Conclusion* of a Notion which *Tully* had

* There are *some Gentlemen*, who, tho' they would not seem to go at all by Authority, would yet be more affected, if I mistake not, should they understand, that such things as these might be cited *also from their great Idol Mr. Bayle*. I will therefore add this short Note for *their Service*. It would be something *pleasant*, tho' not what I should most desire, to convince a *devious Free-Thinker* of his Error, by the Dint of a *well-suited Authority*. But, should there be no Conviction wrought any ways as to the main Affair, it must then be acknowledg'd, that *Mr. Bayle* was capable of being mistaken, and could argue as weakly and idly as other Men; which will be something gain'd as to *other Points* and good Purposes. For, in his *Philosophical Commentary* on the Words of the Gospel, *Compel them to come in*, Chap. 1. p. 47 & 50. He speaks much, and in very lofty Terms, of the *Primitive Universal Ray*, which flows from the Divinity, discovering the general Principles of Equity to all Mankind; and from thence (he says) all particular

had in other Places express'd more plainly, and was very fond of, but such as would by no means be allow'd of in the Christian Schools. You will expect when I lay any great Stress upon a Passage of an Author, or commend it so much as I have done this, I should let you see it in *ipsissimis verbis*, not in a *Translation* or an *Abstract*. Here then you have it, and judge of it for your self. But only let me first observe, that *Tully* says in another place, the Laws of Men must needs be taken from and modell'd by this most antient primary Eternal Law.

Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna; quæ vocet ad Officium jubendo, verando à fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut verando movet. Huic legi nec obrogari fas est; neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet,

ticular Laws receive their Sanction and Seal, their statutable Virtue and Right to oblige as Law. 'Tis true he extends his Assertion a good deal further, and excepts not *those Laws and Precepts* which are extraordinarily reveal'd by GOD; but my purpose is sufficiently serv'd by applying it *only to human Laws*, which he undoubtedly here includes, and in which respect his Proposition is *most uncontestable*. Again, he explains *this Primitive Universal Light* to be GOD Himself, the ESSENTIAL TRUTH, printing on the Mind of Man the *eternal Laws of Just and Honest*, and continually presenting to him the *Idea of his Duty, and of his Dependance on the Sovereign Being*. Is this now become good Sense, I ask, in Mr. Bayle's Mouth? Or is this mighty Reasoner become like other Men, as one of the tame and vulgar Herd led on by great Names of Philosophers, Fathers, and Schoolmen? Is Mr. Bayle also amongst the Dreamers, the Visionaries and Enthusiasts?

neque

neque tota abrogari potest. Nec verò aut per Senat-
tum, aut per Populum solvi hâc lege possumus. Ne-
que est quærendus explanator aut interpres ejus alius.
Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis, alia nunc, alia
posthac, sed & omnes gentes & omni tempore una lex
& sempiterna & immutabilis continèbit; unusque erit
communis quasi magister & imperator omnium Deus;
ille legis hujus inventor, disceptor, lator; cui qui
non parebit ipse se fugiet ac naturam hominis asperna-
bitur; hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiamsi cætera
supplicia, quæ putantur, effugerit.

WHO now that is acquainted with the Mysteries
of our Holy Religion, and enlighten'd with *Gospel*
Knowledge, could have spoken of the *Law of GOD*
more *significantly* and *weightily*, as *Lactantius* well ob-
serves, than *Tully* here has done? And as this helps to
confirm what I have said some time since of *Tully* in
another Place, to shew, that in establishing Morality
he *did not abstract the Consideration of the Supreme Being*,
so I will add to what I have there said of *Grotius* too
a short Remark here, which yet will serve me in two
several Points upon the Subject in Hand. For,

YOU will easily see, if at any time you will give
your self the Trouble to compare them, that the little
Posthumous Piece of *Grotius de equitate*, printed at the
End of some Editions of his Books *de Jure B. & P.*
is little more than a *drawing out or commenting on Ari-*
stotle's Chapter in his Ethics Nicom. upon that Sub-
ject. But that very learned and judicious Man, whilst
he judg'd it *not unuseful* to add a few other things,
found it *absolutely necessary* to supply the Defect in the
important Point *μηδὲ τὴν ἀσπίδα*, putting us in mind, that
Equity

Equity looks to the Intention not only of the human Law-giver, but to *the Mind and Will of the Supreme Legislator*, and accordingly He has thrown into every part of it such Expressions as these, *Non tantum Constitutiones civiles, sed ipsius naturæ notitias comprehendimus—ad ipsa naturæ principia recurrendum—Dei leges ex notitiis naturæ impressis—leges illæ præstantiores—&c.*

Who would have thought, that one of the most unaccurate Expressions that ever escap'd from *Grotius*, and that *seem'd* to convey a Notion perfectly different from the just Sentiments he was fix'd in, and has oftentimes express'd with the greatest Clearness, that such an *obnoxious* Expression should by a grave and learned Person *be singled out for Praise*? But see what plain Inconsistencies great Men may sometimes fall into! The same Person who says, That *Grotius judiciously remark'd, there would have been a natural Obligation on Men to practise moral Virtue, even if it should be suppos'd, what indeed is impossible, that there was no GOD, or if an Abstraction were made of his Existence for a Moment*; this very Person, [*M. Leibnitz*] and in the same very short Piece, brings this as a *heinous Charge* against *Puffendorf*, that he represents the Principles and Maxims of the Law of Nature such as might take place with Atheists.

BUT whatever Inaccuracies that Author I have last nam'd may have been guilty of, One of which I have had occasion already to touch upon, I think I can shew you easily, that He is not One of the *Abstracters* against whom my Arguments are bent. For he says expressly, that “How manifest soever the Principles of the Law of Nature are
“ and

and their Utility, yet that they shall have the Force of a Law, it is necessary to suppose that there is a GOD, who governs all Things by his Providence, and who has prescrib'd to Men with Authority the Observation of these Rules which He has made known to them by the Light of natural Reason," *Abridgm. Lib. 1. c. 3. §. 10.* His great and fundamental Principle, as himself calls it, viz. That of Sociability, he makes to be so necessary, because GOD has requir'd of Men to practise the Laws and Dictates of it, p. 7. of the French Edit. *Amst. Religion he says is the principal and strongest Cement of Society*, p. 88. And that without a Sentiment of Religion Man would not be sociable, p. 74. And agreeably to all this, he has in this his *Abridgment* of his larger Work a whole Chapter of *Natural Religion*, that he might fully take off the Objections which had been made by some, who had observ'd, and it seems severely censur'd, his *Defect and Unaccuracy in this Point.*

I ASSURE my self You will take this Letter in good part, and excuse the * great Length of it. The true Intention

* It was really intended only for a *private Letter*, but since an abundant Zeal (or Indiscretion, if any shall choose to call it so) suggested the *Dispersing* a Few of them, my having treated a little more of the *general Question* than was at first intended, will be so far from a Redundancy or Impropriety, that I am more inclin'd, in this View, and upon these Measures, to think I have hardly said enough of it. One short Word therefore I will here add to hint, that when I have here chose to enlarge upon the Matter in Dispute, as touch'd sometimes in the *most celebrated Laws*, and as represented by the *most eminent Interpreters of them*, it was

E not

attention of it was to put You upon your Guard against Principles and Notions that are growing too fashionable, I doubt, tho' they may have *very unhappy Consequences*, if

not because I was more sure to find *Them* than I might have been to find *Divines, Schoolmen, Moralists, Christian, and even Pagan*, in Agreement with me. Nor can the Learned suspect that the former may have introduc'd, by a sort of *Byass from their Profession*, the Term and Notion of *LAW* in speaking of the Relations betwixt *GOD* and his Creatures, and in setting forth, as far as it comes in their Way to do it, the Part a rational Creature is to act towards the *DIVINITY* as a Matter of the *most proper Obligation and incumbent Duty*. It would be as easy to shew at large, that Philosophers of all Sects us'd the same Language, if we except the *Herd of Epicurus*. Some *Fatalists*, I acknowledge, but such of them who were most remarkable for using *quaint and forc'd Expressions*, have spoken of *GOD's obeying a Law*—but if they were not the *most extravagant* sort of them, they said withal, that *GOD made the Law which He obey'd*, as that of *Seneca*, e. g. *Semel jussit, semper parat, &c.* A Word or two may be dropp'd of this kind perhaps in the Writings of the *Stoics*, whilst the *WILL, the COMMANDS, the LAW OF GOD* are found almost in every Page, in every Line of them. The manner in which the old Philosophers generally spoke of *Providence* will be found an Evidence, if attended to, for the thing I am here briefly and summarily asserting; because they were wont to represent *Providence* as a *Divine Law by which the rational Creature was govern'd*—as the *Will and Command of the Supreme Being*. This is a Language that was most abundantly us'd, 'tis true, amongst the *Platonists*, but it was far from being peculiarly and singularly theirs. What then should induce Men who are *Christians*, who cannot therefore be impugn'rs of a *Providence*, and who would take it ill, I imagine, to be esteem'd *rigid Fatalists*, what should induce *Them* studiously to decline representing the *Deity* as *giving a Law* to his Creatures (though without it there can be no proper or moral Government) and to be so fond of pic-

if they come to be thoroughly imbib'd, and to be join'd with other of the loose Opinions, which every Man of general Conversation may expect to hear often insinuated, or sometimes directly and openly asserted by *superficial Libertines*, in Contempt of Religion and Morality, and therefore in manifest Contradiction both to *Modesty* and to *common Sense*.

THE Building carefully upon a good and strong Foundation, the continual meditating and commenting on the ETERNAL LAW, is the Means to be successful and reverend in the particular Profession You have chosen, the Way for Men of all Professions to be

viewing Him as under a Law and Obligation—as OBEYING together and in common with his rational Creatures a Law resulting from the necessary and eternal Differences of Things?

THE Reduction of the harsh and long exploded Language of the old Fatalists (since there seems to be no Design of restoring them, by a proper *Postliminium*, to their ancient Rights, State and Significancy) might be pass'd over perhaps, or at least not be caution'd against with so much Ardor, if that were all the Mischief. But to set aside and disregard the Will of GOD, and perpetually to represent Him rather as Obeying than as Giving a Law, is not only a Revival of improper Phrases of the Fatalists, by those who would condemn them, in the Sense that was anciently and usually annex'd to them, but at the same time it verges (if I am not exceedingly mistaken) to the Epicurean Principle, and touches upon it too in the very worst Point of Contact, I mean where it is most injurious to Divine Providence, and takes away God's Government of the Moral World.

THIS Tendency of the manner of speaking I have thus remark'd upon is not discern'd, I know, by those Divines and Moralists who are so fond of it, and I presume they will not take it very ill of any who shall endeavour, as I have here done with something of a Zeal, whatever Epithet may fit it, yet without any Ill-will or Disrespect to their Persons and Characters, to let Them see it.

useful and esteem'd in Life; and the surest Preservation from the Contagion of every Thing that is evil and hurtful, whether it be Principle or Practice, is ever to preserve the most lively Sentiments of GOD'S CONTINUAL PRESENCE AND INSPECTION.

I HAVE represented these Things to You with an abundant Caution and Copiousness, for which I might claim the Protection of a noted Law-Maxim, in common with all those who are not doing Hurt in their Officiousness; I might plead the Privilege (though hardly without Pedantry I doubt) of some Seniority in Years, or I might plead that, and with a much better Grace, of the particular Friendship which has been and is betwixt us. But I believe my self so well secur'd by the Consciousness of a good Intention on my own part, and by the Knowledge of your good Disposition, that it will be needless and improper to offer any Plea at all to You by way of Excuse for this long Address. As for others who (as I have now order'd it) may come to see it, I will hope this Representation of Things may be of Use either to prevent Mens inclining to dangerous Opinions and evil Practices, or to confirm those who were right in their Notions, and well inclin'd to Virtue and Piety before, and that it will rather be look'd upon as a thing aim'd, and also fitted perhaps in some little Degree, to INSTRUCT some, and INNOCENTLY ENTERTAIN Others, than thought worthy of Blame and Reprehension. I am, S I R,

Uc. Uc.

F I N I S.

